

# VAIGA to promote agri processing

International workshop to help farmers and support schemes for organic produce

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The State government is preparing to give a big push to processing and value addition of agricultural crops and promotion of organic produce.

The VAIGA (Value Addition for Income Generation in Agriculture) international workshop and exhibition, to be hosted by the Kerala Agricultural University at Vellanikara, Thrissur, from Wednesday, would seek to create

an ecosystem for farmers and young entrepreneurs, Agriculture Minister V.S. Sunil Kumar said in a pressnote.

## **Not even 10%**

Pointing out that not even 10% of the agricultural produce in Kerala was currently undergoing processing and value addition, he stressed the need to tap the immense possibilities in the sector.

“Based on the discussion in VAIGA 2016, the Agricul-

ture Department had set up agro parks for special agricultural products, established specialised incubation hubs for processing of agricultural products, and promoted the cultivation of millets and medicinal plants.”

## **Platform**

VAIGA 2017, the pressnote said, would provide a platform for farmers, technologists, researchers, master trainers and entrepreneurs

to address the problems plaguing the agricultural sectors.

The workshop will focus mainly on honey, banana, millets and coconut. Experts and farmers from countries like Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Malaysia are expected to participate in the event.

## **Entrepreneurs**

Mr. Kumar said the government had decided to extend all support to entrepreneurs

participating in VAIGA. Moves were on to open agro super bazaars in all districts to provide an outlet for value added products made by farmers and farmers groups.

## **Growth**

The Minister said the workshop would focus on achieving a 30% growth in value added products.

He announced a campaign to promote organic products under the brand Kerala Organic.